



Environmental And Individual Safety



Module 6, Section 6

TABLE OF CONTENTS

What You Will Learn In This Section:	2
Poisoning	3
Fires	4
Remember to RACEE	4
In the Event of Fire: Choosing and Using A Fire Extinguisher	4
Fire Evacuation Considerations.....	5
Tornadoes	7
Tornado Safety	7
During a Tornado	7
After a Tornado	7
Thunderstorms	8
Flooding	8
Seasonal Safety	10
Summer Issues	110
Winter Issues	12
Transportation	13
Safe Transportation	13
Moving People in Wheelchairs Safely	14
Protect Your Back	15
More Exercises	18
OJT #58 - Bed to Wheelchair Transfer	18
PRACTICE EXERCISE - Wheelchair to Toilet Transfer	20
PRACTICE EXERCISE - Wheelchair to Tub Transfer	21
Masks	22
Bloodborne Pathogens.....	22

This section contains information for Direct Support Persons (DSPs) who provide supports to adults and/or to children and young adults who receive home and community-based services through one of the Division of DD's Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services waiver programs. The service delivery methods are participant and family directed. Direct care providers can be employees of the person and his/her family or employed through community agencies.

What You Will Learn in This Section:

This final section is designed to teach trainees how to keep themselves and the individuals they support safe. Topics covered in this section include isolation procedures, food, safe transportation, safe evacuations, fire safety and safe lifting.

- What to do if someone drinks a cleaning product.
 - What to do in case of a fire.
 - How to use a fire extinguisher.
 - How to safely transport people in wheelchairs.
 - How to lift a heavy object without injuring my back.

 - How to keep my back flexible.
 - What isolation procedures are?
 - How to safely evacuate injured individuals in an emergency.
- Different learning styles.

Be sure to follow your agency's policies regarding the emergencies that are explained in the following pages.

Poisoning

Accidental poisoning is something that we all hope will never happen. But what if it does happen while you are at work? What would you do? Be sure to find out your agency's policy on accidental poisonings. Store cleaning supplies securely and well away from food and food preparation areas.

Keep all products in original containers.

Store pesticides, gasoline, turpentine, paint products, car products, and garage products out of reach and out of site. Lock up these products. Keep paint in good condition.

Always prepare and use products according to label directions.

Never store food and household cleaners together.

Never transfer products like bleach, gasoline, insecticides or other cleaning agents to containers such as a soft drink bottle, cup or bowl.

It is important that you know the telephone number for the Illinois Poison Center.

800/222-1222

Fires



Fire is one of the leading causes of accidental deaths in the home. Besides practicing basic safety rules, you may also be called upon to act in the event of a fire. You should review your agency policies on fire drills and evacuations, including the maximum time, frequency, time of day, special procedures for blocked exits, individuals with special needs (wheelchair, autism, blindness, etc.). Fire prevention is everyone's

responsibility. If you see any practices or situations that reduce fire protection for individuals or employees, report those problems to be corrected.

When an alarm sounds for a fire drill or a real fire, follow the instructions provided by your facility. After a fire drill or an evacuation drill, everyone's response to

the fire drill is reviewed and evaluated so improvements can be made in future drills or in the case of an actual fire.

Video: “Get Out Alive”

Remember to RACEE

If you smell smoke or discover a fire at your site, you should do the following in the order outlined:

Remove/Rescue the person you support and anyone else in immediate danger.

Alert the fire department by calling 911 (or local emergency number) from a phone out of harms way.

Contain the fire by closing the doors between you and fire.

Extinguish the fire, by using the proper type of fire extinguisher, when appropriate or if it is small and easy to contain.

Evacuate (leave) the building immediately.

In the Event of Fire: Choosing and Using A Fire Extinguisher

To better understand how to recognize fire hazards, your facility should explain, in advance, to all of its employees, its policy regarding when an employee should attempt to put out a specific type and size of fire and when all fire extinguishing actions should be left to the firefighters. In the latter case, all employees should move directly from Containment actions to the step of Evacuation. In some cases, your facility may have a policy that says it is appropriate for you to try to put out certain types and sizes of fires using a fire extinguisher.

Source: Illinois Department of Human Services, Bureau of Training and Development

Fire Evacuation Considerations

- § Always crawl or stoop low in leaving a smoky environment to stay above the heat and toxic gases.
- § Keep doors and windows closed.
- § When evacuating a non-ambulatory individual, make sure his/her head is as low as possible.
- § Smoke follows the path of least resistance. Know your building and predict where and how smoke will travel. Use this information in your evacuation plan.
- § NEVER re-enter a burning building once you and others have made it outside.

- Š If trapped in a room, seal the doors and vents to prevent smoke from entering.
- Š If trapped in a room, hang a bed sheet/blanket/etc. from the window. This is the universal sign to request help.
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- Š When considering the use of commercial cleaning products that maybe toxic some eco friendly products could be considered such as vinegar, activated charcoal, etc. Visit the website that lists the Sixty Uses of Vinegar at <http://www.i4at.org/lib2/60vine.htm>

The Role of the DSP in Responding to Emergencies

In order to effectively handle emergencies, you will need to be prepared and be informed. You may want to consider these steps:

Learn about the types of hazards that may impact your community (blizzards, tornadoes, floods, and so on). You can get more information at your local emergency management office.

<http://www.state.il.us/iema/>

Find out what emergency plans are in place at your agency. Look over whether those plans meet your specific needs.

Identify what the plan is for notifying people when a disaster may be on its way or is actually occurring.

Consider how a disaster might impact your daily routines. Make a list of you're your specific needs before, during and after a disaster.

Become Familiar with Your Agency Emergency Plans!

Don't wait for an emergency to happen to become familiar with these. Read them now so you are prepared to handle emergencies.

Thunderstorms

Thunderstorms many times precede a tornado. Thunderstorms can have straight-line winds which may exceed 100 miles per hour. During a thunderstorm you should move into a building, preferable an inner room away from windows. If you are outside and unable to find a sturdy building, move to a car. Close the windows and stay away fro doors. Do not say in or near water.

Lightning is the second most common weather condition that KILLS (floods are first).

Flooding

Be aware of flood hazards. Floods can roll boulders, tear out trees, destroy buildings and bridges, and scour out new channels. Flood waters can reach heights of 10 to 20 feet and often carry a deadly cargo of debris. Flood-producing rains can also trigger catastrophic debris slides.

Regardless of how a flood or flash flood occurs, the rule for being safe is simple: head for higher ground and stay away from flood waters. Even a shallow depth of fastmoving flood water produces more force than most people imagine. The most dangerous thing you can do is to try

walking, swimming, or driving through flood waters. Two feet of water will carry away most automobiles.

If you are under a tornado WARNING, seek shelter immediately!

If you are in:	Then:
A structure (e.g. residence, small building, school, nursing home, hospital, factory, shopping center, high-rise building)	Go to a pre-designated shelter area such as a safe room, basement, storm cellar, or the lowest building level. If there is no basement, go to the center of an interior room on the lowest level (closet, interior hallway) away from corners, windows, doors, and outside walls. Put as many walls as possible between you and the outside. Get under a sturdy table and use your arms to protect your head and neck. Do not open windows.
A vehicle, trailer, or mobile home	Get out immediately and go to the lowest floor of a sturdy, nearby building or a storm shelter. Mobile homes, even if tied down, offer little protection from tornadoes.
The outside with no shelter	<p>Lie flat in a nearby ditch or depression and cover your head with your hands. Be aware of the potential for flooding.</p> <p>Do not get under an overpass or bridge. You are safer in a low, flat location.</p> <p>Never try to outrun a tornado in urban or congested areas in a car or truck. Instead, leave the vehicle immediately for safe shelter.</p> <p>Watch out for flying debris. Flying debris from tornadoes causes most fatalities and injuries.</p>

http://www.fema.gov/hazard/tornado/to_during.shtm

Preparation for Survival

Know your agency’s disaster preparation policies!

Gather these things in a safe place off site to use in an emergency:

- Battery powered radio, flashlight and plenty of extra batteries
- First aid kit and book
- Adjustable wrench for turning off gas and water
- Bottled water (1 gallon per person)

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- Non-electric can opener
 - Extra set of keys
 - Current Disaster Plan with information about relocation, poison control, physician names and phone numbers. All emergency numbers should be posted by the phone— large enough for everyone to read.

This information must be available for everyone:

- List of current medications and prescribing physician
- A supply of currently prescribed medications
- Emergency information for everyone (date of birth, insurance/Medicaid number & card, food sensitivities, nearest relatives, guardians, or friends phone number)
- Signed consent for treatment form

NOTE: All emergency numbers should be posted by the phone large enough for everyone to read.

Seek out the nearest facility that is air conditioned, such as a cooling shelter, a senior citizen center, a church, a mall, the local YMCA or a center designated by your community. Even a few hours spent in air conditioning can help your body stay cooler when you go back into the heat. Fans alone will not effectively cool an overheated person when air temperatures are above 90 degrees Fahrenheit.

Heat Exhaustion occurs when excessive perspiration leads to extreme loss of fluids and salt (electrolytes).

Symptoms include dizziness, nausea, light-headedness, severe headache, cool clammy skin, heavy perspiration, shallow breathing, muscle tremors or cramping. If person shows other medical signs of distress call EMS 911

Prevention: drink extra liquids (no caffeine or alcohol), schedule strenuous activity during morning or evening hours, take frequent water breaks, and wear lightweight loose-fitting clothing.

Heatstroke is caused by overexposure to direct sunlight.

Symptoms include headache, red dry face, skin hot to the touch, body temperature 105° or more, strong pulse, loss of consciousness, seizures or irregular heartbeat. If person shows other medical signs of distress call EMS 911

Treatment: place person in semi-sitting position in shady area or indoors, loosen tight clothing, flood the head and body with cold water or ice. Do not put anything in the mouth.

Heat cramps are muscle pains or spasms.

Symptoms Basically in the abdomen, arms or legs that affect people who sweat a lot during strenuous activity. This depletes the body of salt and moisture.

If person shows other medical signs of distress call EMS 911

Treatment: stop all activity and sit quietly in a cool place, drink clear juice or a sports beverage, do not return to strenuous activity for a few hours. Seek medical attention if cramps do not subside in one hour.

Excessive sun exposure can increase the risk of skin cancer.

Protection: seek shade, cover up, wear a hat, wear sunglasses and rub on sunscreen.

Treatment: Follow first aid procedures for 1st, 2nd, or 3rd degree burns.

If person shows other medical signs of distress call EMS 911

Floods - an produce raging waters in just a few minutes. They can occur in very small streams, creeks, etc.

Protection - includes getting to higher ground, staying out of flooded areas, and abandoning stalled vehicles in flooded areas if you can do so safely. Try to take a flashlight with you to attract help.

Seasonal Safety (

Winter Issues

Preparing for severe weather. Emergency supplies include: portable radios, flashlights, extra fresh batteries, supplies of food that can be prepared without a stove, candles and matches, extra clothing, fire extinguishers, an ample supply of prescription medicines.

Winter driving: Equip your car with blankets, extra outer clothes, fresh batteries, flashlight, battery powered radio, sand and traction mats or old rugs, shovel, windshield scraper.

Hypothermia is a drop-in body temperature to 95° or less. It can be fatal if not detected promptly and treated properly.

Symptoms include an attitude of not caring, forgetfulness, drowsiness, slurred speech, a change in appearance (such as puffy face), weak pulse, slow heartbeat, very slow shallow breathing,

coma or death-like appearance. Other symptoms may include shivering, stumbling or falling, stiff muscles, respiratory arrest. People who are more susceptible include those with pre-existing and current health conditions, medications and intoxicants and compromised acute or chronic central nervous system impairments, and wetness.

Treatment: Take the person's temperature. If a person's temperature is 95 or below, call 911 or take the person to the hospital. If the person is alert, give small quantities of warm food or drink. Do not give alcoholic beverages.

Frostbite most often occurs to face, ears, wrists, hands and feet.

Frostbitten skin is whitish and stiff and the area is painful.

Procedures for adverse weather. (flooding, tornado, torrential downpour, slippery roads, unplowed snow on roads, blowing snow, etc.)

Vehicle inspection and log after trip is over.

Moving People in Wheelchairs Safely

Wheelchair use presents special issues which must be addressed. There is a right way and a wrong way to transport people who need assistance using wheelchairs. Please keep the following guidelines in mind when you assist individuals in wheelchairs.

Review your agency's moving people safely policies!

Always ask the individual if he/she wants assistance.

Encourage the individual to self-transport as much as possible.

Make sure the individual's hips are all the way back in the wheelchair.

If necessary, fasten seatbelt.

Verify that footrests are in place and the individual's feet are properly on them.

Make sure brakes are locked before helping a person into or out of a wheelchair.

Grasp both push handles on the chair firmly.

Start and stop slowly; take corners slowly, and maintain a steady pace while moving.

Avoid jostling the person or throwing him/her off balance.

Be alert for changes in surface levels (door jams/elevator floor, etc.) Hitting a half-inch rise at standard wheelchair speed can bend the front casters and pitch to person forward.

Don't open doors by pushing with the front of the wheelchair. This can damage the footrests, the person's feet or the door. Stop the wheelchair, open the door by hand,

and bring the wheelchair through. If the door does not stay open on its own, hold it with one hand or your backside. Do not let the door bang the side of the wheelchair.

Be sure the person's weight is pushing back toward you on inclines and ramps. Going uphill means pushing the person. To go downhill, turn the chair around and walk backwards. The person's weight will always be pushing back toward you.

Be alert for anything that can trap front casters or cause the chair to tilt, such as holes, cracks, stones, sand or soft shoulders.

To maneuver up curbs: stop at the curb, raise the front casters by pressing the foot lever, roll the front casters onto the sidewalk and roll the large wheels over the curb by lifting slightly on the push handles as you push forward.

To maneuver down curbs: face backwards with the large wheels coming first. Maintain some upward pressure on the push handles as you pull the wheelchair toward you.

During the winter months try to use sidewalks that have been cleared/plowed.

Ensure that all body parts are covered to prevent frost bite. Carry extra gloves/mittens with you.

Protect Your Back

One thing we emphasize here is safety. One of the ways that you can injure yourself or the individual you are assisting is by lifting or transferring incorrectly. Please follow the guidelines on the next few pages when lifting heavy objects or transferring/assisting individuals.

Reaching

When reaching for supplies, especially in high places, can strain your back.

Reach only as high as your shoulders.

Use a stool or stepladder if needed.

Test the weight of the load by pushing up on a corner before lifting. If it is too heavy, get help.

Bending

When bending down to reach or lift, move your whole body to protect your back.

Bend your knees and hips, not your back.

Kneel on one knee, if necessary.

Get as close to the object as you can, so you won't have to reach with your arms.

Lifting

Lifting is one of the most common causes of back injuries.

Get a firm footing.

Tighten your abdominal muscles to support your back when you lift.

Lift with your legs.

Keep the load close to your body.

Pushing

Pulling large objects can be as hard on your back as lifting. Instead, push.

Stay close to the load without leaning forward. Tighten

your stomach muscles as you push.

Push with both arms, keeping your elbows bent.

Turning For some tasks you may be tempted to twist your body. Instead:

Get close to the object. You may need to kneel down on one knee.

Position yourself so you're stable.

Use your arms and legs to do the work...not just your back.

Planning

Always plan the move. Think about what you're going to do before you do it.

Do not move any object further than is absolutely necessary.

Prepare the surface where the object is being moved to before moving it.

When you are moving something, use a wide, balanced stance with one foot ahead of the other.

Keep the lower back in its normal, arched position while lifting.

Posture While Standing

When you perform a task that requires prolonged standing, you may slouch and forget to maintain the natural curves of your back. Bad posture can cause muscle tension, stiffness, fatigue, backache, and neck ache. It also contributes to degeneration of disks and ligaments.

To maintain good posture:

Stand close to the individual so you don't have to lean forward.

Bend with your knees and maintain your back's natural curve.

Prevention

If you find that you do experience back pain, you may want to do some exercises to strengthen your back.

Lifting Techniques

Most of back injuries result in simply from bad techniques when lifting heavy objects. Bad lifting techniques also become a much larger problem when it becomes a habit and you lift with poor techniques over and over. Make sure to remember these lifting techniques when lifting heavy objects.

DO NOT use fast or jerking motions when lifting
DO NOT bend or twist at the same time when lifting
Keep all loads close to the body. DO NOT handle loads away from the body.
Use those around you. Don't lift a heavy object when there are people around you. Ask
them for assistance.
Lift with your LEGS and NOT your BACK.

Back Exercises

Press Up

Purpose: To increase flexibility of spine.

1. Lie on stomach and place hands on floor at sides of shoulders, elbows bent.
 2. Keeping elbows bent, slowly push upper body off floor. Keep hips on floor. Relax.
- Repeat 10 times, lifting higher each time.

Standing Back Bend

Purpose: To increase flexibility of spine.

1. Stand.
2. Press palms against lower back.
3. Gently arch back.

Wall Slide

Purpose: To strengthen back, hip, and leg muscles.

1. Stand with back against the wall and feet shoulder width apart. Find your position of comfort.
2. Slide down the wall. When hips and knees are bent to 90 degree angle, hold for a count of 5 and slowly slide back up. Repeat 5 times. Work up to 3-minute holds.

Arm and Leg Reach

Purpose: To strengthen muscles of back, buttocks and legs.

1. Start on hands and knees. Find your position of comfort. 2. Extend one arm straight out in front of you and hold it parallel to floor for a count of 5.
3. Then extend one leg straight out behind you and hold it parallel to the floor for a count of 5.
4. Don't let back, head, or stomach sag and try not to arch back. Return to starting position. Repeat 5 times, and then switch arms and legs.

More Exercises



Chin Tuck- Purpose: To stretch chest, neck, and shoulder muscles.



Sit or stand upright.

Without lifting chin, glide head straight back. You know you're doing this right if it gives you the feeling of a double chin.

Hold for 20 counts and repeat 5-10

times.

Range of Motion - Purpose: To stretch and relax neck muscles.

Sit or stand upright.

Tilt head slowly toward one shoulder.

Relax and let gravity pull head down to stretch neck.

Hold for 10 counts, rest briefly, and then switch sides.

Repeat 5-10 times on each side.



When transferring an individual from bed to wheelchair, have help by pushing with arms and extending legs.



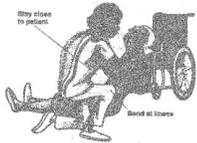
the individual

1. If possible, take advantage of aids like mechanical lifts to safely move individuals.
2. Use a transfer belt to help you move an individual safely and securely when doing a wheelchair transfer. Place hands on individual’s waist or transfer belt to prevent twisting and provide support.
3. If possible and necessary, teach individuals to assist moving themselves in bed and to give assistance during transfers

Equipment needed:
Bed/Wheelchair

Steps	Partner Check	Instructor Check
DSP appropriately identifies the individual.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DSP asked permission and explained what was going to be done.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DSP used transfer belt/mechanical lift properly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DSP locked the wheelchair properly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DSP removed wheelchair armrest nearest the bed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DSP supported individual's knees between their legs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DSP moved the individual correctly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DSP lowered individual into wheelchair by bending knees.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DSP had the individual hold him/her at the waist.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PRACTICE EXERCISE - Wheelchair to Toilet Transfer



Attention: A wheelchair to toilet transfer presents special problems because there is little room to maneuver in most bathrooms. The possibility of falling is increased.

Equipment needed:

- Chair (representing toilet)
- Wheelchair

Steps	Partner Check	Instructor Check
DSP appropriately identified individual.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DSP asked permission & explained what was to be done.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DSP washed his/her hands.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DSP positioned individual's stronger leg closest to toilet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DSP locked the wheelchair.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DSP correctly had the individual use the grab bar and wheelchair arm for support.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DSP bent knees correctly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DSP obtained additional help, if needed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DSP washed his/her hands.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PRACTICE EXERCISE - Wheelchair to Tub Transfer



Attention: Since your ability to maneuver may be hampered by working within a small space, do what you can to break up the steps and to enlist the individual's help. If the patient is fairly strong, one person can handle this move by grasping safety railings and taking



some weight onto their arms.

Equipment needed:

- Wheelchair
- Tub

Steps	Partner Check	Instructor Check
DSP appropriately identifies the individual.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DSP asked permission and explained what was going to be done.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DSP washed his/her hands.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
DSP filled the tub with water not hotter than 110 degrees.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DSP put the transfer belt on the individual, if needed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DSP positioned the individual's legs directly underneath the wheelchair and gave support as needed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DSP had the individual sit on the edge of the tub or transfer seat.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DSP moved the wheelchair out of the way.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DSP correctly helped the individual put his/her legs into the tub.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DSP let the water out and assisted with drying and putting clothes on, as needed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DSP correctly used transfer belt, as needed, to lift individual out of the tub and into the wheelchair.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Definitions